



# The Examiner

**Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms**

*"Serving with Pride and Professionalism"*

Volume 3, No. 5

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## Spotlight on...

### Education and Training involves all hands at Naval Hospital 29 Palms

The Education & Training Department consists of 510 people within the command. However, only seven of them are actually assigned to the department. According to Commander Susan Knutson, Head Education and Training, "We all work together to provide quality education and training."

In October of 1994, the Education and Training department started on the road to quality, by identifying what they do, how they do it, why they do it and how they can do things better and meet their customers needs. Education and Training ended up with a list of twenty in-house programs, mobile courses, documenting training, plus a multitude of other taskings.

CDR Knutson wishes to express her thanks to all the talented instructors throughout the hospital and base! "Without you, we would not be able to provide as many educational opportunities as we do," she stated. Education and Training provides courses in provider and instructor resuscitative medicine, operational medicine, professional development, professional certification, EMT, and EMT refresher courses, just to name a few. They also offer the mandated courses of Command Indoctrination, Annual Update Training, Hospital Corps Clinical Orientation, and more. They also bring in mobile training courses such as Landing Force Medical Staff Planning and NAVLEAD LPO.

Education and Training Department's new motto is continuous improvement! Thanks to the hospital staffs suggestions, support and commitment, improvements are always happening. The process for certification of Corpsmen in medication administration was streamlined and improved. Additional instructors and equipment for ACLS, BLS, PALS, NRP and EMT were identified and obtained. A flowchart for the administration of all educational programs was developed, standardized and implemented. This is resulted in increased communication with instructors, departments and participants, streamlined and timely set up for all programs, and better teamwork throughout the department.

In May, Education and Training will be conducting a survey to obtain additional suggestions for improvement and find out if what they are offering meets the hospital staff needs. This will be a random survey conducted on a one-to-one with our staff. If you are not one of the random selections, but want to provide input, Education and Training will have survey forms and information available. Results will be published in June.

The Medical Library is very important part of the Education and Training Department. The library is open from 0630-1500 Monday through Friday. After hours use of the library is on an honor system and access is available through the OOD. Misuse of this privilege causes monetary loss and a loss of informational resources to hospital staff. Please abide by the checkout procedures posted in the Medical Library. Your support is necessary to maintain this wonderful service. Visit Anne O'Connor to find out what's new in the Medical Library.

If you want to know more about any aspect of the department and what they do, stop in for a visit. They are open from 0730-1600, Monday through Friday (except for holidays).



*The staff of Education and Training Department, from L to R, CDR Susan Knutson, HN Julie Kelso, Ms. Linda Deutsch, HN Thomas Wiley, Ms. Shirley Sanchez, Ms. Anne Oconnor and HMC Edward Windhurst, stand ready to meet the Educational Needs of Naval Hospital 29 Palms.*

### Happy Birthday Navy Nurse Corps!

To celebrate the Navy Nurse Corps Birthday, which is May 13, several events have been planned during the week of May 8 through May 12.

During the entire week:

- \* Nurse Corps Officers may display their professional school pins on their uniform above their name tags.

- \* The following privileged nurses were chosen from a drawing and will be able to utilize a Director's parking space:

Sheryl Humphreys (CO's space)

CDR(s) Silki (XO's space)

ENS Weinatzl (DFA's space)

LT Doukas (DNS' space)

Charlotte Meinecke (DSS' space)

ENS Hoover (DAS' space)

Sandy Yockey (HMCM's space)

- \* Letters of Appreciation for "Teamwork", "Excellence" and "Friendship" will be available for any staff member to present to any nurse.

May 10-- High Tea will take place on the Galley patio at 1400. All military and civilian RN's and LVN's will be invited. Flowers will be donated by the Medical Corps and distributed to all nurses.

May 12-- Cake cutting ceremony at 1400 on the Quarterdeck.

May 13-- Nurse Corps Birthday Dinner/Dance.



## The Hart of the Matter!

# Vision for Naval Hospital 29 Palms – We Believe It!

*Vision: Where you want to be in 3-5 years*

*"We are the desired duty station for Naval Medical Department personnel and our patients view us as the finest of medical treatment facilities."*

A vision is inspirational. It guides the strategic plan of an organization. It is achievable.

The Naval Hospital Board of Directors recently completed revision of the Hospital's strategic plan. A key part of any such plan is to chart our way into the future. We believe that Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms has so much going for it, that we can indeed be the most desired place to work and live in Navy Medicine. Realizing, achieving this potential requires a total team effort. I believe the key element in making Twentynine Palms a most desired place to live and work is to promote quality of life issues. Our Commanding Officer, Capt. Chitwood, and our Commanding General, Maj Gen Palm hold Quality of Life as a top priority -- second only to accomplishment of our fundamental missions.



*Captain S. E. Hart*

*We believe that Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms has so much going for it, that we can indeed be the most desired place to work and live in Navy Medicine.*

By default or by desire, I have been tasked as Chairman of the MCAGCC Quality of Life Improvement Team (QOL QMB). We want to make a difference. The CO and CG want to make a difference. We will devote whatever time, energy, and available money it takes to improve the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of our people. What does this Base and this Hospital have going for it? We are committed to going beyond the motto of "We Care" to demonstration through action that WE CARE. If the Hospital or Base fail to produce, then we all lose. No one wants that and I don't think it will happen.

What can you do? Each and everyone of you can make a huge contribution to us achieving our Hospital vision and to improving QOL in general for MCAGCC: Show you care. Let's go out of our way to show we care for our patients and for each other. Someone lost? Take them to their destination. Someone need something. Go get it for them. Someone sick? Follow-up by phone to check on them. Someone down? Pick them up. Someone need help on a project? Volunteer.

A most desired place to live and work is not determined by physical surroundings -- it is determined by sense of community.

I have spent 7 years on ships. Dirty, crowded, hot, bad water, overflowing commodes. Where have I enjoyed living and working the most? On a ship. Well... actually, I'd rather live with my wife and kids than a bunch of guys on a ship, but you get the point: Sense of community.

We can make our vision happen. We have the power to do it

through caring for our patients and each other. Get on board, let's each do what we can to improve the QOL at Naval Hospital and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. I'll keep you posted on MCAGCC initiatives that arise from the Quality of Life Improvement Team.

## NAVOSH NOTES

### Tips for Safety at the ATM

*By J. Haas*

*Safety Manager*

Always treat your ATM card as if it were cash. With that in mind, use these important safety tips to protect yourself and your account when using the ATM.

- Memorize your Personal Identification Number (PIN).
- Always shield the keyboard when entering your PIN, to keep your transactions confidential.
- Take a friend with you or use only well lighted ATMs when making transactions.
- Never allow anyone to use your card and PIN. If you do, remember you will be responsible for the transactions of these authorized users.
- Retrieve your receipt and ATM card and clear the screen before leaving the ATM. Receipts should be kept in a safe place to verify transactions on your periodic statement.

### WHO AM I?

I am an interactive teaching tool, my brain consist of computer chips, wires, and a laser disc player. I have the medical knowledge of a full hospital and I am more enjoyable then a ride at Six Flags. WHO AM I? I am "VIPER".

The *EXAMINER* Newsletter is an authorized publication of the U. S. Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8250. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Navy.

Commanding Officer

*CAPT C. S. CHITWOOD, MSC*

Executive Officer

*CAPT S. E. HART, MC*

Public Affairs Officer/Editor

*DAN BARBER*

Assistant Editor

*EDNA M. HARRISON*

The *EXAMINER* welcomes your comments and suggestions concerning the newsletter. All comments should be forwarded to the Public Affairs Office by the 15th of each month. The Public Affairs Office telephone number is (619) 830-2362. The *EXAMINER* staff would like to thank all those who participated in this Edition.



## Master Chief's Soap Box

# Once in a while, take the time to tell someone thank you!

The countdown continues, one more article after this one and you can color me gone. Twenty-Seven years, 8 months and 11 days and I'm finally out of a job! Well, I have said for years that my goal in life was to grow up and become a civilian type and I'm about to reach that goal whether I want to or not. However, I must admit I'm looking forward to the opportunity.

I wonder how I'll view Navy Medicine once I'm on the outside looking in? Obviously I'll no longer be an active duty Sailor seeking medical care, but rather one of many retiree's vying for an appointment. Hopefully I'll retain the same perspective and understanding of the system that I've had all these years on active duty. And that brings me to the title of this next to last article, "perspective."



HMCN R.A. Lubitz

*I wonder how I'll view Navy Medicine once I'm on the outside looking in? Obviously I'll no longer be an active duty Sailor seeking medical care, but rather one of many retiree's vying for an appointment.*

I have been lucky in that I've had the opportunity to view Navy Medicine from the inside. And because of this my "perspective" is probably a lot different than many of you reading this article. Your "perspective" as the active duty Marine, Sailor, family member or retiree is that of the customer. Your "perspective" is based on your perception or expectations combined with your experiences with military medicine.

And when it comes to your family you want the best care available. And Lets also be honest, when you or your family are sick you want an appointment today not next week. After all full medical coverage for you and your family members goes with the job doesn't it? Remember that recruiter who convinced us to enlist promised us free medical coverage for us and our dependents as long as we remained on active duty. And once you retired didn't he say you would be covered for life? You bet he did! And for many of you, military medicine is all you have known throughout your adult life.

I guess I tend to get very protective when people criticize Navy Medicine. And I'm especially thin-skinned when it comes to criticism of the people who work in our military treatment facilities all over the world. That's not to say that some criticism at times isn't warranted. however I honestly believe the care offered in our facility is as good or better than you will find anywhere in this country, civilian or military. And the people who provide you the care at this facility are as dedicated as any you will find anywhere.

But you know the people that work here, both civilian and military are no different then you and me in one regard. And that is that once in a while they too enjoy hearing positive feed back from you their customers. So next time you're in a military treatment facility, whether it be here or somewhere else, and you receive quality, timely

service provided by a friendly group of professionals then don't be afraid to acknowledge that service with a thank you or a word or two of gratitude. It seems far too often we are quick to complain or criticize but all too often the reverse is true when it comes to praise or acknowledgement.

So please take that little extra time, if it is warranted, to just say that you! And to each and everyone of our patients, thank you for utilizing are facility. Because without you we wouldn't exist.

## A Note To Active Duty...

Active Duty members will soon be enrolled in the TRICARE Prime Program, however, it is important to note that active duty members **are never eligible for CHAMPUS benefits.**

This means that Active Duty members should never use a civilian health care source unless you are referred, in writing, by your designated Military Treatment Facility (MTF).

Active Duty members will be enrolled in the hospital's Composite Health Care System (CHCS), the military's health care computer system, and will continue to use their designated Military Treatment Facility or the area where the health record is held, as the Primary Care Manager (PCM).

Your designated Military Treatment Facility (MTF) will assist you if additional information is needed.

## Live Fire Exercise...

Several staff members from Naval Hospital 29 Palms were invited to witness a Live Fire Exercise recently at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms.





# Letters...

## I disagree

In his *The Hart of the Matter!* column (Examiner, April 1995), the Executive Officer, Capt. Hart, stated "At this command, if you fail the PRT 3 times in any 4 year period, you will be separated from the Navy." I disagree. In the four years that I have been at this command that has not been the case. I can easily recall the faces of several fellow staff members who were (some still are) either not within weight standards or unable to pass the Physical Readiness Test. Contrary to the XO's statement, they were and are allowed to transfer, retire, attend school and even receive awards for their outstanding performance.

At this command I have noted that the majority of the staff remain within standards and feel comfortable with passing the test. Several staff members (officer and enlisted), however, are not within standards and by their actions (or lack of) remain this way by choice. What about them? Where is their pressure to change?

In his article the Executive Officer makes some very good points about the way the Physical Readiness Program should be managed and points out that is a BUPERS-mandated program. Great! Then we need to stick to it. Those of us who are "old timers" at this command know that things of this nature are changing. Hopefully this means the command will stick to the "hard line" and quit being "wishy-washy" on this and other issues. Only then will this place change for the better. However... I've heard it all before.

Respectfully,  
Jim Irwin

## Outstanding Job!

Commanding Officer Naval Hospital

As the Commanding Officer of the Naval Hospital, I think you need to hear from the Marines and Sailors aboard the Combat Center on services given by your command. **OUTSTANDING JOB!**

My wife delivered a healthy baby girl on 950317. We spent the whole day in the Labor and Delivery Ward. My wife and daughter spend another four days in the Nursery and Maternal Infant Ward for various reasons.

I would like to say thank you for the outstanding job that was done. The personnel took care of my wife and daughter with ease, competence, smile, and a friendly attitude. The personnel who took care of them went above and beyond what we expected them to do. I would like to say thank you by name to each and everyone in this letter but they are too numerous to list.

I am very grateful to the personnel in Labor and Delivery, Nursery, and Maternal Infant Ward. You have a superb staff under your command. Please, keep up the good work.

Semper Fidelis,  
D.A. Porter  
USMC

## Gratitude expressed

Dear Capt. Chitwood,

I am writing to express gratitude for the wonderful experience the delivery of our third child was on 14 March.

The staff in Labor and Delivery were so supportive and encouraging. I remember in particular, Ens. Mann and HN DeLaVega as being so accommodating and willing to help the delivery go as I had hoped it would. With their care and support of myself and the baby, the whole delivery experience was a wonderful one -- the best

one out of three so far.

The delivery doctor was Dr. Cary Ostergaard. I would recommend him to anyone! He is thorough in his explanations of procedures. He is professional and yet very personable.

They all make a great team!

Sincerely,  
Carrie L. Tersellie

## Outstanding Services

Dear Captain Chitwood,

This letter is to express my appreciation for outstanding services rendered to me today at Naval Hospital, Twentynine Palms.

Recently I received orders to "Cobra Gold '95". In order to participate in this Thailand-based exercise, I required a number of vaccinations. I will be working in the bush with the Marines, near the Laotian border. Lt (jg) Loren Locke, the Environmental Health Officer, took ownership of my case. I called him as a stranger, informing him that I am a Naval Reservist in need of some vaccine assistance. He told me that he would be happy to help me. He ensured the availability of all vaccines, including a less common one which he reportedly went to some trouble to obtain. He kept me informed of his efforts through two courtesy calls to my Palm Desert business office. He asked me where my medical record is maintained, and I told him it is at the San Diego Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center. He then called there and spoke with a Corpsman about my case, in order to ensure that I be properly vaccinated. He availed himself after normal working hours in order to conform to my schedule. In addition to the vaccines I was told I needed via a Naval message, he added yellow fever. When I arrived at the Hospital, he guided me to the proper place to receive the vaccines, a point some distance from his office. He waited for me there, then escorted me back to my place of origin. This level of service is a tribute to Lt (jg) Locke and demonstrate a sincere professional commitment to excellence. I told him that his courtesy and service attitude are truly remarkable. He humbly told me that he was just doing his job.

All too often we hear about what goes wrong in military medicine. I am writing this letter to tell you about what went right and to recognize good customer service.

Very Respectfully,  
Kyle F. Kaker  
Commanding Officer  
COMPHIBGRU ONE (Det. 319) and  
President  
Palm Springs Navy League

## Letter Policy:

In an effort to provide a forum for feedback the Examiner will now feature a Letters to the Editor section on a regular basis.

Letters will be published on a first come first served basis. They should be typewritten, with the writer's full name and the letters should be brief and to the point to allow maximum participation by others.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for corrections and brevity. Letter writers should also refrain from making personal attacks. Letters addressing specific problems may be forwarded to the Patient Contact Representatives or other appropriate hospital staff members for action to resolve the problem.

Send or deliver your letter to the Public Affairs Office by the 15th of each month for the following month's newsletter. The Public Affairs Office is located in room J-014 on the bottom floor of the hospital. The mailing address is: Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital Public Affairs, Box 788250, MCAGCC, Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8250. Fax: (619) 830-2348.

For more information, call Dan Barber at (619) 830-2362.



## Here's To Your Health...

### **Testicular Cancer and TSE**

*By Charlotte Meinecke*

*Nurse Educator, Naval Hospital*

Testicular cancer is a disease caused by the growth of abnormal cells in the testicle. The actual cause is unknown. A slow growth of cancer cells in the testicle eventually causes the testicle to become enlarged or a lump that can be seen or felt.

Men who have or have had an undescended testicle, whether or not it was surgically corrected are 33 times more likely to develop testicular cancer than men who have not had this problem.

An undescended testicle is a when one or both testicles do not complete the natural passage from inside the abdomen to the scrotum, which normally occur before birth.

Signs of a tumor in the testicle include:

- A lump in the testicle itself that is usually not painful, but may cause slight discomfort at times. (There is normally a small bump called the epididymis on the back of each testicle.) Compare one testicle with the other if you are in doubt whether you have a lump.
- Enlargement of one testicle after puberty.
- Enlargement of the breasts (with some types of tumors).

If the tumor has spread, there may also be other symptoms such as: low back pain, difficult urination, a cough, or breathing problems.

How is it diagnosed? Your health care provider evaluates the details of your health history, examines your testicles and other parts of your body. Other tests may be ordered, such as x-ray, blood specimens, ultrasound, etc.

In certain kinds of testicular cancer, when the testicle is removed early, before obvious signs of the spread of the cancer, prompt drug therapy may be highly effective. Other treatment options include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and surgery.

You should examine your testicles once a month in order to help detect abnormalities early. Each male is different and it may take a few testicular self examinations (TSE) to know what is normal for you. Eventually, you'll become familiar with how your testicles feel and appear and will be able to recognize anything abnormal.

Remove your clothes and stand in front of a mirror. After a bath or shower is a good time because the scrotal skin is relaxed. With one hand, lift your penis and check your scrotum for any change in shape or size or for red distended veins. The scrotum's left side may hang slightly lower than the right. Then feel for lumps, nodules, swelling or a change of consistency. To examine your right testicle, place your right thumb on the front of the testicle and your index and middle fingers behind it. gently press your thumb and fingers together, they should meet. Make sure you check your entire testicle. Then, use your left hand to examine your left testicle in the same manner. Your testicles should feel smooth, rubbery, and slightly tender, and you should be able to move them. Locate the rope-like structure at the back of your testicles. This is called the epididymis, your spermatic cord extends upward from the epididymis. Gently squeeze the spermatic cord above your right testicle between the thumb and first two fingers of your right hand. Then, using the thumb and first two fingers of your left hand, examine the spermatic cord above your left testicle. Check for lumps and masses by squeezing along the entire length of the cords.

If you notice any lumps, nodules, swelling, or changes, notify your health care provider. It is important to have regular checkups with

your health care provider. Regular checkups are especially important for men who have had an undescended testicle. Any lump in the scrotum, pain or discomfort, or enlargement of the breasts should be reported right away.

If you would like more information on Testicular Self Exam, testicular cancer, or other topics, please contact Charlotte Meinecke, Nurse Educator, 830-2218.

### **1st Suture Certification Class Completed**

Recently 10 Naval Hospital Corpsmen assigned to the Emergency Department and Military Sickcall were selected to attend the first (pilot) Suture Certification Class offered here at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms.

This program's primary goal is to train and certify Hospital Corpsmen to close skin lacerations by suturing. This practice will enhance the delivery of health care by allowing physicians to attend to patients requiring more urgent care and to prepare Corpsmen for field situations. Lieutenant Commander Todd Ewert, MC, USNR of the Emergency Medicine Department taught the class which included lecture, demonstration, practical suture experience and an exam.

All 10 Corpsmen successfully passed the class and are well on their way to accumulating five suture experiences under the close supervision of a physician.

Through facilitating this program here at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, the hope is to increase the operational readiness of the staff, increase the access to patient care and promote job satisfaction within the department. Currently the program is limited to EMD and MSC personnel, but future plans are to expand the program to all interested staff members.



*HA Douglas Reynold, left and HM2 Willie Dodson on the right practice their suturing techniques as LCDR Todd Ewert, below oversees other classmates in the hospital's first Suture Certification class.*





## New guy on the block at Naval Hospital 29 Palms

It is with great pleasure that I come aboard this command to offer Pastoral Care to the staff and patients. From day one I was able to sense the cheerful spirit in the command that enables us to work together and support the mission of the hospital. There is no doubt in my mind that I will enjoy my first tour here at the hospital.

In this article I would like to introduce myself by giving you a little personal history.

Originally I'm from Penasco, New Mexico which is located in the northern part of the state. After graduating from High School, I went to Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich. and received a B.A. in Theology. Immediately after graduation I entered the Seminary which is also located at Andrews University. In 1989 I graduated with a Masters in Divinity and began pastoring a four church district in New Mexico. I pastored there for three years and then moved to Amarillo Texas where I pastored a three church district for one and

a half years. While there I felt called to serve as a Navy Chaplain. I enjoy working in as many different areas of ministry as possible and being in the Navy gives me this opportunity. Prior to joining the Navy I was thinking about being a hospital chaplain. When I received orders to this hospital I know that my calling is from the Lord.

While on this tour I will continue with the programs and services that Chaplain Pelikan launched and work in other areas that need some attention. I would like to encourage you to share some of your concerns and ideas that you might have for this department. My office is open for any input and needs that you might have.

I look forward to working with you as we care for those who need our services. May our Lord give each and everyone of you His blessing here at the Naval Hospital.

*Chaplain Ortega*

### Civilian Information...

## Family Friendly Leave Act (FFLA)

Recently there have been several CivInFo articles concerning the "Family Friendly Leave Act" (FFLA). This article is to explain in more detail, the leave entitlement and the leave usage. This information is very important to both supervisor and employee.

As of December 2, 1994, sick leave can be used by an employee to give care or otherwise attend to a family member having an illness, injury, or other condition which, if an employee had such condition, would justify the use of sick leave. Family member means the following relatives of the employee:

- Spouse, and parents thereof;
- Children, including adopted children and spouses thereof;
- Parents;
- Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; and
- Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

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***As of December 2, 1994, sick leave can be used by an employee to give care or otherwise attend to a family member having an illness, injury, or other condition which, if an employee had such condition, would justify the use of sick leave.***

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Also as of December 2, 1994, employees can use sick leave for purposes related to the death of a family member, to include making arrangements necessitated by the death and/or attending the funeral. For example, travel; attending memorial services; pre-

funeral gatherings/ceremonies; reading of the will. The same definition of family member stated above applies to bereavement.

There is a limit on the amount of sick leave an employee can use for family care and bereavement each year.

The basic limit for full-time employees is 40 hours. An additional 64 hours can be used if the use of that leave does not cause the amount of sick leave to the employee's credit to fall below 80 hours. For example, an employee with a sick leave balance of 115 hours uses 40 hours of sick leave for family care. After accruing 16 hours of sick leave (balance is now 91 hours), the employee requests 32 hours of sick leave for bereavement. This request can not be approved because the 32 hours would reduce the balance to less than 80 hours (91-32=59). At this point, the employee would only be eligible to use 11 hours (91-11=80).

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***Remember, you must submit a leave slip when using sick leave under the Family Friendly Leave Act, and in the remarks section indicate "Family Friendly Leave Act" or "FFLA".***

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Remember, you must submit a leave slip when using sick leave under the Family Friendly Leave Act, and in the remarks section indicate "Family Friendly Leave Act" or "FFLA". All leave approving officials will need to maintain information on employees who use sick leave for family care or bereavement. Manual tracking is the only way leave approving officials can ensure sick leave is used only as authorized.

If you have any questions concerning the Family Friendly Leave Act, contact Linda Jensen at extension 2517.



# *Naval Hospital Hard Chargers....*







*Happy Birthday  
Navy Nurse Corps!*

*May 13, 1908*

*to*

*May 13, 1995*

*More Than  
80 Years of Dedicated Service  
To The Navy*